

# The Life Challenge

*"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10*

**Sermon Series:** Ruth

**Title:** The God of Happenstance

**Speaker:** Matt Ewert

**Text:** Ruth 2

**Date:** November 12, 2017



## DISCUSSION

### A Quick Review: Ruth Chapter 1

- Thus far we have met the Elimelech family and seen all the tragic circumstances they experienced in Moab.
- The remnant of the family, Naomi and her daughter-in-law, uproot themselves from 10 years in Moab and travel back to Naomi's roots: Bethlehem. (Hmm! Does that place sound familiar?)

### Re-reading Chapter 2: A New Set of Circumstances

- As you read this chapter again, keep in mind the following two questions:
  - What are the key events in this episode of the Ruth drama?
  - Who are all of the players in this part of the drama?
- How would you describe each of the players? What would their characteristics be?
- Which one of the characters is the one who really drives the story? Why?
- Who changes most in the story? Why?
- If there is one, who would be your hero?

### So what? How is this instructive for us?

- Why is this book included in the Bible at all? Is this just a feel-good story? E.g. Ruth was tough and tenacious; Boaz was generous and kind; Naomi saw the fault of her ways. If *they* can do it—pulling up their bootstraps—so can *we*!!! Or is there more to this story than just a self-improvement project gone good?
- Is there a bigger story at play here?
  - See Matthew 1:5. What is extraordinary about this verse?
  - Check out Romans 15:8-9; Romans 3:27-29. How does Ruth play into the Grand Narrative of the Kingdom of God?
- So the Grand Narrative is about you and me being players in this drama. Through the Good News of salvation through Jesus' death and resurrection, **we** are invited into this bigger story —where the Kingdom of God is being revealed through Christ **in us and through us**. We aren't about pulling up our bootstraps to please God. Rather we respond to God's incredible love! First John 4:19: "We love because he first loved us."

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- **Three Instructive Moments:** This may be the place where prayer gets very real.

- **Naomi Moments:** Transformation can happen for us, for others!

- \* Are you feeling abandoned by God, feeling separated from God's presence at this point like Naomi had felt? Are you able to be vulnerable and accept the prayer of the others in the group?
    - \* The Spirit of God can use you to restore another's faith in the lovingkindness of a loving Creator God. Who might that be?

- **Ruth Moments:** Thinking about being a risk-taker

- \* We are all different people. Do you tend to be a risk-taker or are you a risk-aversion type?
    - \* Do you agree that we are all on a mission as individuals, as a Life Group, and as a church? Can you share an instance where you took a risk?
    - \* Is the Holy Spirit stirring within you to step out and take a risk for the Kingdom of God? Can you share that with the group?

- **Boaz Moments:** A call to incredible generosity

- \* Might God be calling you to be radically generous—with your money, your time, your kindness and care for someone else, some cause? What might obedience look like for you?
    - \* Might the Holy Spirit be challenging you to step way out on a limb, to step outside your comfort zone, outside the status quo—hearing the voice of God and following through with that prompting?